

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 SIG-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL NICE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

INFO ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 239458

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TAGS: AORG, OCON, UNESCO

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR INCLUSION
IN UNSCO EUROPEAN REGION

REF : STATE 224244

1. SUMMARY. ADDRESSEE POSTS (INCLUDING EMBASSY PARIS) REQUESTED TO APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENTS AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL AND ASK THAT THEIR DELEGATIONS TO 19TH UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE (NAIROBI, OCTOBER 26 - NOVEMBER 30, 1976) SUPPORT EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION THAT GENERAL CONFERENCE BASE ITS ASSIGNMENT OF MEMBER STATES TO GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS ON THE WISHES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE REGION CONCERNED, AND THAT WHEN THIS PROCEDURE HAS BEEN ADOPTED, THEIR DELEGATIONS SUPPORT ISRAEL'S ASSIGNMENT TO EUROPEAN REGION. END SUMMARY.

2. IN 1974 THE 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE (GC) OF UNESCO REJECTED ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR ASSIGNMENT TO EUROPEAN REGION (WHICH COMPRISES BOTH WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPEANS, AS WELL AS U. S. AND CANADA), LEAVING ISRAEL ONLY MEMBER THEN UNASSIGNED TO A REGIONAL GROUPING. VOTE WAS 33-48 (SPAIN) WITH 31 ABSTENTIONS (TURKEY, PORTUGAL, GREECE, FRANCE) AND 22 "ABSENT" (CYPRUS, MALTA AND MONACO). THIS POLITICALLY INSPIRED GESTURE WAS ONE OF GC'S ANTI-ISRAELI ACTIONS THAT TRIGGERED CONGRESSIONAL CUT OFF OF U. S. PAYMENTS TO UNESCO. ALL MEMBERS VOTED ON ISRAEL, AS ON ALL REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS, WITH NO SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR VIEWS OF REGION CONCERNED. ANTI-ISRAEL VOTE WAS SPEAR-HEADED BY ARAB AND MOSLEM STATES AND SUPPORTED BY USSR AND EASTERN EUROPEANS, EXCEPT ROMANIA, WHICH WAS "ABSENT". IF GC HAD FOLLOWED TRADITION OF LEAVING A LARGELY REGIONAL MATTER TO REGIONAL GROUPING ITSELF, THE SUPPORT OF GREAT MAJORITY OF WESTERN MEMBERS OF EUROPEAN REGION WOULD HAVE INSURED ISRAEL'S ADMISSION.

3. WITH 18TH GC ACTION IN MIND AND WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL M'BOW'S STRONG SUPPORT, 40-MEMBER UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD LAST FALL RECOMMENDED THAT 19TH GC, IN UPDATING REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS, BE GUIDED BY VIEWS OF MEMBERS OF RELEVANT
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REGION. (IN ADDITION TO ISRAEL, THREE NEW MEMBERS -- SURINAM, GRENADA AND SAN MARINO -- HAVE NOT YET BEEN ASSIGNED TO REGIONS.) VOTE IN BOARD WAS 25 (FRANCE)-3 (EE'S) - 3 ABSTENTIONS (SPAIN), WITH 9 ARABS/MOSLEMS COUNTED "ABSENT."

4. SUCCESS OF EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION AIMED AT GIVING MEMBERS OF REGION CONCERNED DECISIVE ROLE IN ASSIGNMENTS

TO THAT REGION WILL DEPEND MAINLY ON WHETHER EE'S AND ARABS ARE PREPARED AT LEAST NOT TO ACTIVELY OPPOSE ISRAEL'S REQUEST TO BE ASSIGNED TO EUROPEAN REGION. AT SAME TIME, SINCE A FAVORABLE OUTCOME ON THIS ISSUE IS PREREQUISITE TO RESUMPTION OF U.S. PAYMENTS TO UNESCO AND RESOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION'S GROWING FINANCIAL CRISIS, DEPT. IS SEEKING TO GARNER SUPPORT FOR THE NEW PROCEDURE WHEREVER THERE IS ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

5. IN VIEW GENERAL AGREEMENT IN UNESCO THAT REGIONAL DECISIONS SHOULD BE BROADLY BASED, IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT AT LEAST WESTERN SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL BE AS SOLID AS POSSIBLE. SPAIN, WHICH OPPOSED ISRAEL AT 18TH GC BUT ABSTAINED ON EXECUTIVE BOARD RESOLUTION REFERENCED PARA 3, ABOVE, IS A KEY TARGET, ESPECIALLY SINCE BOARD'S ACTION WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD TO BE FIRST STEP TOWARD REVERSING 18TH GC VOTE. FRANCE, ONLY OTHER WESTERN ADDRESSEE COUNTRY REPRESENTED ON BOARD AT PRESENT TIME, VOTED FOR THE RESOLUTION, SUGGESTING A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE ON GOF'S PART AS WELL.

6. GIVEN CRITICAL, PERHAPS DECISIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE TO FUTURE OF U. S. RELATIONS WITH UNESCO AS WELL AS OF ORGANIZATION ITSELF, DEPT. HOPES ALL HOST GOVERNMENTS WILL SUPPORT ADOPTION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD PROCEDURE TO GIVE REGIONS DETERMINING VOICE IN THEIR MEMBERSHIP AND WILL VOTE FOR ISRAEL'S INCLUSION IN EUROPEAN REGION. ADDRESSEE POSTS ARE REQUESTED TO TAKE EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIONS, UNDERSCORING GRAVITY OF PRESENT CRISIS IN U.S./UNESCO RELATIONS PRECIPITATED BY POLITICAL ACTS OF PREVIOUS GC. POSTS SHOULD EXERCISE THEIR DISCRETION, IN LIGHT OF LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES AS WELL AS HOST GOVERNMENT'S VOTING RECORD ON THIS ISSUE, IN CONFIDENTIAL

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STRESSING FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) ISRAEL'S ASSIGNMENT TO EUROPEAN REGION WOULD NULLIFY ONE OF 18TH GC'S MOST CLEARLY POLITICAL ACTS DIRECTED AGAINST ISRAEL AND WOULD CONSTITUTE AN ESSENTIAL STEP TOWARD RE-ESTABLISHING VIABLE BASIS FOR A FULL AND ACTIVE U. S. PRESENCE IN UNESCO, INCLUDING PAYMENTS OF ASSESSMENTS.

(B) CONTINUED EXCLUSION OF ISRAEL FROM EUROPEAN REGION, OR ANY ADDITIONAL ANTI-ISRAELI ACTIONS, WOULD BE CERTAIN TO RESULT IN CONGRESS CONTINUING TO WITHHOLD FUNDS, PROLONGING UNESCO'S SERIOUS FINANCIAL PLIGHT, JEOPARDIZING U.S. PARTICIPATION IN UNESCO AND UNDERMINING NOT ONLY UNESCO BUT, IN BROADER SENSE, UN ITSELF.

(C) IT IS CLEARLY NOT IN UNESCO'S INTEREST -- OR IN INTEREST OF OTHER WEO'S -- FOR U. S. TO LEAVE UNESCO, CREATING A VOID WHICH SOVIETS WILL BE TEMPTED TO EXPLOIT AND SEEK TO FILL.

(D) THERE IS REAL DANGER THAT OPPOSITION TO ISRAEL'S ASSIGNMENT TO EUROPEAN REGION COULD SERIOUSLY DIVIDE 19TH GC, TO THE GREAT DISPLEASURE OF ALL THOSE MEMBERS (ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA AND OTHER PARTS OF THIRD WORLD) THAT ARE ANXIOUS TO SUPPORT DG M'BOW (FIRST BLACK AFRICAN TO HEAD A MAJOR UN AGENCY) AND MAKE THIS GC, THE FIRST TO BE HELD IN AFRICA, A SUCCESS.

7. FOR VALLETTA : DEPT. LEAVES IT TO EMBASSY'S DISCRETION WHETHER OR NOT TO APPROACH GOM AND, IF EMBASSY BELIEVES APPROACH WOULD BE USEFUL, BEARING IN MIND IMPORTANCE DEPT. ATTACHES TO THIS, MATTER OF TIMING AS WELL, IN RELATION TO LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

8. PLEASE REPORT RESULTS ASAP TO DEPT. AND U. S. PERM DEL UNESCO. KISSINGER

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